FUNNYWORLD 5

FUNNYWORLD, No. 5, April 1967. Published six to eight times a year by Mike Barrier, 5112 P Street, Little Rock, Arkansas 72207, for distribution with CAPA-alpha.

ON THE ANIMATED CARTOON FRONT

Walt Disney's death will not mean a curtailment of the animation program at the Disney Studio; if anything, it will be expanded....The next Disney feature after "The Jungle Book" (which has its world premiere at Expo 67 at Montreal this August) will be "The Aristo-Cats," to be released around 1970....In between, there will be another "Winnie the Pooh" featurette, since the demand for cartoon featurettes is growing rapidly...."Winnie" was to have been the first feature cartoon after "The Sword in the Stone," but Walt Disney was dissatisfied with it and ordered it scrapped. Enough was salvaged for the featurette released last spring....Another scrapped feature was "The Rescuers," which was to have been released after "101 Dalmatians." The film was to have been about two mice who help a prisoner escape from a Communist concentration camp....MGM will begin production this year on its first cartoon feature, "The Phantom Tollbooth." The MGM brass want the animation department to produce Hanna-Barbera-type cartoons for Saturday morning television, but Les Goldman and Chuck Jones are opposed. VARIETY reported not long ago that Jones and Ray Bradbury are working together on a TV special....John Hubley, late of UPA, is working on a combination live-action/animation feature to be called "Gulliver's Troubles." It's to be a "very loose variation of Swift's classic," Hubley told the New York TIMES. He said the story "deals with the discovery of gold on another planet and the race for it from earth. It's told from Gulliver's point of view but it's lighthearted and not as pessimistic as Swift." Hubley also is working on six other feature-length films, some for TV, some for theaters....TV Guide for February 11 and the New York TIMES for March 5 both contained interesting (if not entirely accurate) articles about the Saturday morning animated cartoons, and the March 6 issue of THE NATION contained a provocative article about Walt Disney....There may be a shift in emphasis on the Disney television program in the future, with more original programming and fewer of the old theatrical releases.

WHO'S WHO ON THE DISNEY COMIC STRIPS

A name to remember: Floyd Gottfredson. The "Mickey Mouse" newspaper strip began in January 1930; Gottfredson began writing and illustrating it in April (his first strips appeared in May) and he has been illustrating it ever since. He wrote the strip until 1943, when Bill Walsh (later co-pro-

BY WAY OF EXPLANATION

This issue was originally scheduled to appear in February. It was delayed first one month, and then two, as I tried to finish a long article called "The Lord of Quackly Hall," about Carl Barks and his approach to the Disney ducks over the years. Obviously, since it's not in this issue, that article is still unfinished. It was imperative, though, that I publish FUNNYWORLD this month, if only because my backlog of material was growing so large. Even without the Barks article, this issue would have been much longer than it is if I hadn't junked or postponed some other articles--a piece on the synthetic Dogpatch to be built in North Arkansas, the answers to my "funny animal" minutiae quiz in FW #3, several long CAPA-alpha mailing comments, a Walter Lantz comic books checklist, etc. The next issue of FW should appear in May, and barring some disaster, it will contain "The Lord of Quackly Hall." In FW #1, I urged the use of CAPA-alpha magazines to "dry run" articles for large-circulation fan magazines, which is precisely what I'll be doing by publishing the Barks article in FUNNYWORLD. A revised version will appear in COMIC ART #7, in company with several other Barks items. FW #6 will also contain the first portion of a Barks index, this part covering the Barks strips of the 1940s. Like the article, the index is being published first in FUNNYWORLD so that FW readers can supply suggestions, additions and corrections before the final version is published. The complete and corrected Barks index will be published as COMIC ART BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUPPLEMENT #2, probably next fall. Naturally, everyone who supplies usable additions or corrections to the index as it appears in FUNNYWORLD will receive a free copy. The second half of the Barks index, covering the comics of the 1950s and 1960s, will be published in FUNNYWORLD #7, in June. The next issue--probably a short one--will be published in August, and will contain all the additions and corrections that have been supplied to date, so that they in turn may be added to and corrected. That, hopefully, will leave the index in no further need of revisions.

This issue was supposed to be the first with an illustrated cover, but I decided to postpone that. Next issue will be more like a regular "fanzine" than any of the first five issues, so it seems appropriate to mark the change with an illustrated cover.

Last issue, I asked for help with the postage. I now regret this. Accepting stamps is too much like accepting money for subscriptions, which I want to avoid. I want full control of my mailing list, which I don't have when I've accepted money or stamps in exchange for copies. If you haven't sent any stamps, don't.

And please note my new address.

* *

---

ducer of a number of Disney films) took over the writing, although Gottfredson continued as a sort of co-author. Walsh wrote the strip until 1964, and Roy Williams (the Mooseketeer on the "Mickey Mouse Club" TV show, remember?) has been writing it since then. Gottfredson still draws the daily strip; the Sunday strip has been drawn in recent years by Manuel Gonzales. Floyd Gottfredson, then, is the man who gave us the Phantom Blot, and such fine old stories as "Sky Adventure," "Monarch of Medioka," and "Mighty Whaler." Indeed, a name to remember.

As for some of the other Disney strips: Al Taliaferro, artist for "Donald Duck" from the beginning, still works on the strip, although he is now sharing the work load; Bob Grant is the artist and Bill Berg is the writer for the "Scamp" strip. Jack Boyd writes and John Ushler illustrates "Uncle Remus;" Ushler also illustrates "The Treasury of Classic Tales," which is written by Frank Reilley.

On the subject of the Disney strips, does the name "Ted I. Osborne" ring a bell with anyone? Osborne was mentioned in a TIME article in the late 1930s about the banning of the MM strip from a Yugoslavian newspaper for a few days during the "Monarch of Medioka" sequence. The ban was enforced because the situation in the strip resembled too closely the situation in Yugoslavia, with a young man on the throne and an older man scheming to take it away from him. Osborne was mentioned in the story as "preparing" the strip, which makes him sound like the writer or artist, and he wasn't either. Perhaps he was the head of the Disney comic strip department at the time (a position now held by Frank Reilley). Does anyone know for sure?

- -

THE MIS-"GUIDA"

Those of you who've seen the "Guida a Topolino," (Tribute to Mickey Mouse) published by a group of Italian fans, know that the names of Disney artists I've given above are not the names found there. I don't know where Alfredo Castelli and Company got their information, but I have every reason to believe my information is correct, and I know for certain that portions of the "Guida" are wildly incorrect. Finding out just what the magazine does say is a problem, of course, when you don't speak Italian and you threw out your handy-dandy Italian pocket dictionary because it was of no help in translating I PRIMI EROI. However, enough of the "Guida" is intelligible to an English-speaking reader to permit passing a few judgments.

Let's take the newspaper strips first. Evidently, the "Guida" says that Ub Iwerks illustrated the "Mickey Mouse" strip from 1930 to 1932 and Walt Disney himself illustrated it from 1932 to 1937. This is wrong. Walt Disney wrote the strip for its first few months, including part of the first serial, which evidently began April 1, 1930. Ub Iwerks pencilled the strip for the first 18 weeks, and Win Smith inked it. Smith then pencilled and inked the strip until Gottfredson took over both writing and art. Win Smith died about ten years ago at Phoenix, where he was teaching cartooning. He illustrated two strips in the first issue of LOONEY TUNES ("Bugs Bunny" and "Pat, Patsy and Pete") and probably strips in other early comic books that I don't know about. Actually, I find it a little incredible that anyone could believe that Disney himself illustrated the strip for five years, particularly at such a busy time as the mid-'30s. I was surprised that he ever had anything to do with the strip, but the Disney operation in late 1929 and early 1930 still wasn't all that large.

The "Guida" also says--or seems to say--that Harvey Eisenberg worked on the strip in 1939 and Al Lewin illustrated it from 1940 to 1954. For all I know, both men, and others, may have worked on the strip at various times. It's obvious that Gottfredson has had help occasionally; there are isolated strips or sequences (as reprinted in the comic books) which are too radically different in style to have come from the same man. But at the same time, the changes in Gottfredson's own style over the years are no more radical than the changes in other cartoonists' styles. Carl Barks is a striking example; there was a time when I would have sworn he was at least three people. Not only have the changes in his style been deep, they've been sudden.

In regard to Barks, the "Guida" seems to say that he took over the "Donald Duck" newspaper strip in 1938--which, again, is simply wrong. Al Taliaferro, as I've mentioned, has been the artist for this strip from the beginning.

I suspect there are other errors in the section devoted to the newspaper strips, but I don't want to risk stumbling over my ignorance of Italian while trying to ferret them out, so I'll leave them be.

As for the "Guida's" comic book credits, there seem to be fewer errors here. Both Barks and Paul Murry are correctly identified. However, Ralph Heimdahl is identified as the artist for DONALD DUCK, and I feel certain that this is an error. Ralph Heimdahl is the cartoonist who has illustrated the "Bugs Bunny" newspaper strip since around 1950. According to Carl Barks, he also illustrated Bugs Bunny comic books; which ones, I don't know. I see the BB newspaper strip very infrequently, and I've never had the chance to compare it closely with any of the comic books. In any event, I'm quite sure that he's not the cartoonist whose work is reproduced in the "Guida" and I feel quite sure too that he has done no Disney comic book work, at least not recently, although he did work for the Disney Studio at one time. The cartoonist whose work is reproduced is probably Anthony Strobl, who has illustrated most of the DD strips in recent years, and many other Disney strips besides.

Harvey Eisenberg's name crops up again in the comic book section; he's identified as the cartoonist who illustrated many of the MICKEY MOUSE comic books in the late 1940s and early 1950s (the cartoonist about whom I asked in Question No. 4 in my FUNNYWORLD #3 "Questions and Answers" column). I know that Eisenberg has worked for Western, since I've seen his name in a Tom and Jerry coloring book. The "Guida" says he also worked on strips like Chip 'n' Dale, Tom and Jerry and the Flintstones, in addition to Mickey Mouse; it also seems to say that Eisenberg died recently. Much as I would like to believe that his work is correctly identified here, it's hard for me to do so, in light of the many other errors in the magazine. Perhaps some more trustworthy source will yet provide this cartoonist's identity.

"Alex Tooth" is identified as the artist for two panels of an Uncle Scrooge strip; Alex Toth is the cartoonist meant here, of course, and although I'm not especially familiar with his style, it's difficult for me to believe that he drew these two panels. He's listed also as an artist for the ZORRO comic book, which is at least a bit more plausible.

The "Guida" also gives the identities of a number of Italian cartoonists, and this information surely is more reliable. The Italian strips are well done, with art of higher quality than that in the American Disney comics, on the average. The writing could hardly be any worse than what the U.S. comics offer. Not to mention the better printing and other such side benefits.

The Italians have one exciting publishing project under way at this time: reprints of early "Mickey Mouse" daily newspaper strips. Or, more accurately, reprints of early Italian comic books which reprinted MM strips. However you describe them, they're well worth owning.

The "Guida" seems to say that Chase Craig, one of Western Printing's Los Angeles editors, supplied some of the information it contains. If so, that's a little annoying, since Western is usually close-mouthed when U.S. fans ask them for the identities of artists or writers. I would hate to think that comic book publishers could fall victim to the sort of provincialism that takes seriously only European interest in our native arts.

- -

HOW'S THAT AGAIN? (With no apologies to COMIC ART)

> "My gosh! What cheese--if I only had a bottle of beer!!!"
>
> ---Mickey Mouse, in the daily MM newspaper strip, April 30, 1930.

> "***You read for the story, you wanted to know what would happen, and Mickey Mouse wasn't a comic character, he was just as real as Superman."
>
> ---Roger Ebert in the Chicago SUN-TIMES, December 16, 1966.

- -

SCROOGE ON THE SCREEN

It's no news by now, I'm sure, that the Disney Studio has completed the first Uncle Scrooge cartoon, a 25-minute "educational cartoon featurette" called "Scrooge McDuck and Money." (The comic book version was published last December, under the title UNCLE SCROOGE AND MONEY.) The cartoon, I've been told, is not very good, but not so bad as the comic book would make it seem. It was directed by Ham Luske, who directs most of the animated-cartoon hours on the Disney television show.

What is most interesting about the cartoon, perhaps, is that the publicity about it hasn't played down Scrooge's comic book origins in the least, but has in fact emphasized them. Take, for example, these excerpts from an article in DISNEY NEWS, the quarterly magazine published by Disneyland:

> When not working at the Studio, Scrooge lives in a gigantic money bin in downtown Duckburg, where he keeps a few million dollars around as petty cash. ***

> The foundations of his fortunes are rather obscure, although he has been heard to speak often of his adventures in the Alaskan gold fields. And possibly there is where it all started.
>
> Scrooge's favorite hobbies are counting money and bathing in it ***
>
> In 1947, Scrooge was introduced as a comic book character for a Donald Duck comic, "Christmas on Bear Mountain." It made him a tremendous success. Six years later, in 1953, he got his own quarterly comic magazine, now a bi-monthly, and the company's biggest-selling comic books [sic].
>
> In recognition for this and partly because he claims to know everything there is to know about money, Scrooge was chosen to make his movie debut in "Scrooge McDuck and Money."
>
> Besides lecturing, and ogling mountains of money, Scrooge sings and dances in the picture, and generally makes merry--for, after all, he is the richest duck in the world.

And so forth. Much of Scrooge's "biography" in the article obviously was invented by the Studio (there is a reference to "auxiliary money bins," for example, which don't exist in the comic books), but the basic facts given about Scrooge's origin and "life" are consistent with the Carl Barks canon. Barks prepared a model sheet for use in production of the film, but it was discarded in favor of another version, which resembles Al Taliaferro's Scrooge (in the newspaper strip) more than Barks'. Probably the change was made to reduce Scrooge's resemblance to Donald. I would guess too that someone at Western Printing (perhaps Chase Craig, Barks' editor for many years) supplied the accurate "biographical" facts incorporated in the article. It's nice to find a major movie company adhering to the facts (trivial though they may be) in a press release. Some mention of Barks would have been nice, of course, but you can't have everything. I wouldn't miss seeing the cartoon for the world.

DISNEY NEWS, if you're not familiar with it, is a magazine worth buying. The focus is on Disneyland (the magazine is billed as the "Official Magazine for Magic Kingdom Club Families") but there's plenty of information about the movies and TV shows. It's in its second year of publication, evidently; the first issue I have is Volume 2, Number 2, Spring 1967. Subscriptions are just \$1 for eight issues (two years), \$1.50 foreign. That's only about 12¢ a copy, and the material in each 20-page issue is at least as interesting as what's in the average issue of, say, WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES. Subscriptions should be sent to Disney News, 1313 Harbor Boulevard, Anaheim, California 92803.

- -

One of the features of the Montreal world's fair (Expo 67) this summer will be the World Retrospective of Animation Cinema--a week-long exhibition of the greatest animated cartoons ever made, ranging from Winsor McCay's Gertie the Dinosaur to the winners of the 1967 ASIFA (Association International du Film d'Animation) film festival. The cartoon showings will run a week, from Sunday, August 13, through Saturday, August 19. There will be a concurrent exhibition of animation "archives, artwork and memorabilia" at the Museum of Contemporary Art at Montreal. I have no information yet on tickets, etc., but I'm trying.

The third issue of THE WORLD OF COMIC ART contains two articles of particular interest to people who follow the animated characters. First, there's an article about Roger Armstrong, who illustrated many Disney and Schlesinger comic books in the 1940s. So far as I know, Armstrong signed only one of the many strips he illustrated--"Mary Jane and Sniffles." The other article is about the production of the Marvel television cartoons; it's of interest because the Grantray-Lawrence Xerox animation process is similar, in rough outline, to the Xerox process now being used by the Disney Studio. The shift to Xerox at Disney was part of a general economy drive after the extremely expensive "Sleeping Beauty." Before "Sleeping Beauty." three crews would draw a Disney cartoon--the rough animation crew, the clean-up animation crew, and the inkers. The rough crew consisted of the original animator, an assistant, and an in-betweener; they would completely animate a scene with rough drawings. The clean-up crew, consisting of another assistant, a breakdown man and another in-betweener, would make single-line "clean-up" drawings over the rough drawings. These would then be traced onto sheets of celluloid ("cels") by inkers. Today, there is only one animation crew--animator, assistant and/or in-betweener--whose drawings are more finished than in the old days, and are transferred directly onto "cels" by Xerography. Xerox has advantages, because of its greater accuracy and flexibility. Xerox was first used on a Disney feature for the thorns surrounding the castle in "Sleeping Beauty." The first all-Xeroxed feature was "101 Dalmatians," which was drawn rather roughly for both effect and economy. The cartoons made since then have been Xeroxed as well.

Some of you will recall my famous tongue-in-cheek treatise of last spring on the Diminutive Duo--Mary Jane and Sniffles, that is. I discussed Mary Jane's shrinking powers and the hodgepodge of formulas she used to shrink herself down to Sniffles' size. That piece somehow led to all sorts of odd controversies. Well, you fans of the Tiny Twosome will be delighted to know that they have returned, after four years in Limbo (except for text filler stories) in the May issue of BUGS BUNNY. It's an odd sort of story, almost the kind a comics fan would write, with its revival of old characters and tying up of loose ends. The story goes this way: Bugs Bunny overhears Mary Jane reciting her Famous Reducing Formula, and immediately decides to use it himself, so that his diminished food supply will last longer. He repeats the magic formula and it works, even though he stutters and stammers while trying to remember Sniffles' name. (He doesn't cross his fingers, either, but Mary Jane does.) Obviously, then, this is the true magic formula. For the first time, I think, Mary Jane uses a second magic formula to enlarge to her normal size. It goes this way: "Once again I shut my eyes... when they open, I'll be full-size."

Another mist-shrouded mystery of the Golden Age of Comics is solved at last!

QUESTIONS

I've made some changes in the Questions and Answers columns this issue, to minimize confusion. Fron now on, for quick reference, the number of each question (and answer) will be preceded by the number of the issue of FUNNYWORLD in which the question first appeared. I'll still number the questions sequentially, however, instead of starting with #1 in each issue. Question 5-23, then, is not the 23rd question in the fifth issue, but the 23rd question I'ved asked since this series began. In the Answers column, I've prefaced each answer with a brief reminder of what the question was; giving the full question would consume too much space. When a question goes unanswered for several issues, or is only partially answered, I'll re-ask it and give it a new number. This may cause a little confusion from time to time, but that still would be better than letting a question mildew in a long-forgotten back issue.

And before I pass on to this issue's Questions, a word of thanks to the people who have supplied answers (and that includes some whose answers were superseded by better ones, and so not printed here).

Question 5-23: Was there ever an Andy Panda newspaper comic strip? If so, when did it start, how long did it last, and who drew it? (For the source of this question, see Answer 3-1 below)

Question 5-24: Who was the artist who illustrated most "Raggedy Ann" strips in the 1940s, as well as the early "Andy Panda" strips in NEW FUNNIES, and the whole of TINY FOLKS FUNNIES (Four Color Comic #60)? Was this Henry Vallely?

Question 5-25: Who was the cartoonist who did most of the "Bugs Bunny" strips in LOONEY TUNES in the late 1940s, and several BB one-shots as well? Was this Ralph Heimdahl?

Question 5-26: Did Barney Bear and Benny Burro ever appear together in any animated cartoons, or did they operate as a team only in the comic books?

ANSWERS

Question 3-1: THE EARLY WALTER LANTZ STRIPS

From DICK HOFFMAN: I have CRACKAJACK FUNNIES #39 (September 1941), which contains an "Andy Panda" strip. This appears to be the first Andy Panda strip. There are only three AP pages in this issue, and they contain a group of four-panel strips, as if they were reprinted from the newspapers. All told, there are eight such strips in the three pages.

From DICK HETSCHEL: CRACKAJACK #40, October 1941, contains two pages of Andy Panda.

From RICK DURRELL: I have, as you know, MORE FUN #7, January 1936. This comic has one page of "oswald the Rabbit" by Al Stahl; the strip is copyright 1935. Now, who is this Al Stahl? Since the strip is signed by Al Stahl, does this mean this Oswald is not the original Disney, and later Lantz, character?

(It seems clear enough, then, that the "Andy Panda" strip began in CRACKAJACK #39 and 40 and was switched to THE FUNNIES with #61, November 1941. I've bought THE FUNNIES #60, and it has no Lantz strips. The question remaining about THE FUNNIES is whether the "Oswald" and "Little Eight Ball" strips first appeared in #64, as the Copyright Catalog says, or in some earlier issue. Since the Catalog's other Lantz entries for this period are correct, there's little reason to believe it's in error here. As Rick Durrell's letter indicates, the question remains too what Lantz comic strips/books were published before 1941. Perhaps there were no Lantz strips, as such, before then, but it seems likely that the "Oswald the Rabbit" in MORE FUN is the same character we know as "Walter Lantz' Oswald the Rabbit." Probably the history of the Lantz studio holds the answer to this question.)

Question 3-2: THE "MARGE" CARTOONS IN KING COMICS

From THOR JOHNSON: "Marge" Henderson illustrated a panel strip written by Ruth Plumly Thompson. It ran in KING COMICS from #4 (I have KING #1 and then #4 on) to #61. I don't know if issue #2 and #3 contain this strip. It was called "Sis Sez."

Question 3-10: THE DELL "FAMOUS STORIES" COMIC BOOK

From THOR JOHNSON: I know of only two titles of FAMOUS STORIES: "Treasure Island," #1, and "Tom Sawyer," #2.

From BILL THAILING: There were at least two of the, "Tom Sawyer" and "Treasure Island." I'm not sure, but I believe they were both illustrated by Henry Vallely.

Question 3-11: DATES OF SEVERAL EARLY COMIC BOOKS

From BILL THAILING: POPULAR COMICS #37 was the February 1939 issue. DICK TRACY MONTHLY #24 was the December 1949 issue.

Question 3-12: HI SPOT COMICS AND RED RYDER COMICS

From BILL THAILING: HI SPOT #1 was a complete 68-page book of "Red Ryder" Sunday strips. Near as I can determine, this book begins with the very first "Red Ryder" Sunday strip from the fall of 1938. HI SPOT #1 was released some time during 1940, probably in the spring of that year. I believe you are in error in calling HI SPOT #2 a complete book of "Red Ryder" strips. To the best of my knowledge HI SPOT #2 contained several other strips, including picturization of Jack London's "The Sea Wolf" and the Burroughs "David Innes" strip, "At the Earth's Core," among others. What I believe happened is that HI SPOT #1 was a complete book of "Red Ryder" and HI SPOT #2 was a book of mixed strips, including some pages of "Red Ryder." That was all the issues of HI SPOT COMICS published. Commencing with #3, it became simply RED RYDER COMICS, containing "Alley Oop," "Boots and Her Buddies," "Wash Tubbs," "King of the Royal Mounted," and one or two others.

From THOR JOHNSON: HI SPOT #1 consisted of "Red Ryder" strips, and HI SPOT #3 consisted of "Captain Easy" strips. Then I jump to RED RYDER #8, July-August 1942, published by K.K. Publications.

(So the question is: Was there a RED RYDER #3 and a HI SPOT #3 as well? And if the first two issues of HI SPOT weren't also the first two issues of RED RYDER, then which comic books were?

Question 3-14: "BARNEY BEAR AND BENNY BURRO" IN OUR GANG COMICS

From CARL BARKS: "Barney Bear and Benny Burro" were combined in OUR GANG #11. I did the writing and drawing of their stories for several years.

(Specifically, "Benny Burro" in OUR GANG #8-10, and "Barney Bear and Benny Burro" in OUR GANG #11-36.)

Questions 3-17 and 3-18: DELL'S WAR COMICS STORIES AND U.S.A. COMIC BOOKS

From THOR JOHNSON: Dell's U.S.A. IS READY and WAR were 68-page four-color comics with art by Al McWilliams, Tom Hickey, et al. They were published in 1941-43. I think WAR ran 14 issues.

...AND A FEW MORE QUESTIONS

Question 5-27: I'd like to know if any of the following characters appeared in animated cartoons, or were strictly comic book/strip characters: Mooseface McElk, Mary Jane (of MJ and Sniffles), Grandma Duck.

Question 5-28: The two young woodpeckers, Knothead and Splinter, did appear in the Woody Woodpecker cartoons, of course--but was this before or after their comic book debut in the April 1952 issue of NEW FUNNIES?

Question 5-29: This question concerns the "Peter Wheat" giveaway comic books, which Walt Kelly illustrated for a time. The Copyright Catalog lists two Peter Wheat titles--THE ADVENTURES OF PETER WHEAT and PETER WHEAT NEWS--MONTHLY COMICS AND SPECIALS. ADVENTURES was published monthly from April 1948 through July 1951, then from November 1951 through February 1952, then July and August 1952, October 1952, January and February 1953, April 1953 and June 1953, expiring with #51. The first entry for the NEWS is #25, April 1950. It was published monthly thereafter through #60, March 1953. My questions are: How did NEWS and ADVENTURES differ? Was ADVENTURES actually a detatchable section of NEWS? If so, how is the variation in dates explained? Were there issues of NEWS before #25? Just what went on here? And not least, in which issues did Kelly's work appear?

Question 5-30: What are the titles and first-issue code dates of the Gold Key comic books with these code numbers: 10034, 10103, 10105, 10125, 10154, 10173, 10185, 10188, 10203, 10205-10207, 10209 on; 30015, 30021, 30032 on. As I've mentioned before, I'm sure comics with some of these code numbers haven't been published yet, but I'm also sure that others have been. (For a full explanation of Gold Key's code number system, see FUNNYWORLD #1.)

LETTERS

From BILL SPICER: I think you're right about an enlarged fandom of 4,000-5,000 consisting mainly of kids, and you're also right saying that the majority of the kids wouldn't pay much attention to "the most mature, beautiful, genuinely artistic strips in print," if such a description would ever fit FANTASY ILLUSTRATED (or any other comics magazine). Unfortunately, it's a question of economics, not receptive readership. Right now, I'm lucky to have a little of both--a receptive readership and a decent circulation--but I've still had to raise FI's price to bring it closer to break-even. And most of the other litho'd fan magazines could use a bit more breathing space, too.

From DICK LUPOFF: You lament not having asked people for permission to publish letters about FUNNYWORLD. Here is another area where science fiction fandom has the advantage over comics fandom, due, I am convinced, to seniority; i.e., stfandom faced this problem decades ago and now has well-established conventions. ## In stfandom, any letter of comment is considered fair game for publication unless it is marked, in whole or in part, "DNP" or "DNQ." DNP stands for Do Not Print and means exactly that. DNQ--Do Not Quote--is a stronger injunction; the recipient of the letter is then not to discuss the message even in conversation, no less in print. ## Violation of a DNQ or DNP is regarded as a breach of fannish ethics. (Breach of DNP is also a violation of the copyright law, but I don't know of any legal action being brought over violation of copyright in a fanzine.) ## Further, unless the letter-writer specifies that he may be quoted only in toto (or not at all) excerpting is permitted, providing only that the writer is not quoted out of context. ## Well, you've worked out approximately the stfannish convention yourself, and hurrah say I. As for my letter on FW #1, if the material in it isn't too dated by now, of course you may go ahead and use it.

(Which I'll do; here are some of Dick's comments from that letter--MB)

Your idea of an "All in Color" type series on funny animal type features sounds like fascinating reading, and if it ever gets off the ground I'd very much appreciate seeing copies. One installment I'd particularly like to read would be the one on funny animal superheroes. There were a surprising number; offhand I can recall Super -Mouse, -Duck, -Rabbit (he was a good one!), Mighty Mouse, Hoppy the Marvel Bunny, Atom Cat and of course the recent spate of absurd super-beasts in the Superman series, although they are hardly "funny" animals, at least by intent. ## As you would expect, my strongest interest in the issue was directed to your feature "'Hello There, Boys and Girls' Revisited." I agree with much of what you say, which is no surprise since you're basically taking off on a theme of my own, but not with all of what you say. ## I very much agree that it's fine for kids to read comics. In fact, contrary to the parental stereotype, I've consistently urged my two children to read comics. It hasn't taken, but I think that's just because they re too young and in another year or two the older will start, to be followed shortly by his little sister, who of course tries to emulate everything he does. ## When I read your description of how you "frequently can remember the precise circumstances" I was very much struck by the fact that that is an experience we share, and that I'm sure millions of others share. It may be one of the underlying common bonds of fandom. You've started me to dredging up all sorts of memories connected with comics, Big Little Books, radio and movie serials, etc. ## Your line, "If I was that mad scientist/green glob/fanged Chicom and I had that girl strapped down like that I'd take off her clothes and stare at her," positively broke me up. It also dates you and a momentary reaction dates me, I fear. That "fanged Chicom" meant nothing for a little while. Then I thought it was a typo for Chicon, the name applied to the world SF convention when it is in Chicago, as it has been three times since 1940. Finally I realized that you were using the neologism sometimes applied to Chinese Communists. ## And in my day it would have been "bucktoothed Nip" or some other similar term. Time out while I comb my long white whiskers. ## A final point: In your last line you suggest comics fandom's "producing strips." I wonder if it is the appropriate function of fandom to produce amateur comic strips or books (I know that fandom does). ## Again, this is a problem that stfandom has been discussing for decades in its own context: What value, if any, is there to fan-written and -published science fiction? ## Put another way, is a fanzine a sort of junior-grade prozine...or is it a different kind of publication? ## The answer has generally come around to be that a science fiction fanzine is a different kind of magazine. Most of them publish little or no science fiction per se; they publish (those devoted to stf at all) commentary, criticism, indices, features on authors, editors, publishers, artists, etc. ## Now the solution found in SF fandom may not be the right solution for comics fandom. Maybe it is appropriate for comics fandom to devote its energies, to a significant extent, to creating its own amateur comic books. That wouldn't be particularly to my taste, but then I think I'm hardly typical in this context.

(Dick's concluding remarks deserve some debate, I think--is there any point to amateur strips? After reading STAR STUDDED COMICS #10, I have to wonder, but after reading FANTASY ILLUSTRATED and, yes, WITZEND, the case for amateur strips seems much stronger. The professional comic book field is, after all, narrowly commercial, with little room for experimental work. As WITZEND demonstrates, even professional cartoonists are stepping outside the field occasionally to escape its frustrations. And it's easy to see--because so much of WITZEND itself is dull and conservative--how low the threshold of frustration is. So there's certainly room for amateur--or more accurately, non-commercial--experimental strips then, and probably for strips that try to do well what the professionals do poorly.)

From CARL BARKS: In your FUNNYWORLD, you were wondering how the Patent Office knew Donald Duck was the inventor of a way to raise sunken ships. They probably saw an article with pictures in POPULAR SCIENCE a year or two ago. POPULAR SCIENCE got the story from Danish publications.

(If anyone can supply me with a copy of that issue of POPULAR SCIENCE, either to buy or to borrow, please let me know.)

CAPA-ALPHA MAILING COMMENTS

As I mentioned earlier, one of the penalties of waiting too long between issues is that material piles up, including mailing comments. Next issue I'll have more to say about other contributions, especially Al Kuhfeld's "Teenage PANGOLIN."

Distribution in Little Rock has been spotty recently, and as a result I've missed several comics which I buy regularly. If anyone can supply me with copies at something like the original cover price, I would greatly appreciate it. The comic are: DAREDEVIL 26, MARVEL TALES 7, TALES TO ASTONISH 90, X-MEN 29, DYNAMO 2, NO-MAN 1 on; THUNDER AGENT 10 and 13, and *all* the "Lightning Comics" titles (FATMAN, etc.)--none of them have appeared here. We did get FLASH GORDON #4 and MANDRAKE #4, though, so I guess I shouldn't complain.

To GARY MASON (Bramston): I found your Walt Disney eulogy disconcerting. In the first place, Disney *did* live to see the decline in the quality and popularity of the comic books and strips bearing his name, but there's no evidence that this disturbed him much, if at all. Disney cared most about his movies and Disneyland and Disney World and other such large-scale, big-money projects. The comic books were strictly penny-ante stuff by comparison. Beyond that, though, your deep *personal* grief over Disney's death is alien to me. Not because Walt Disney didn't mean a great deal to me, in any number of ways, but because I doubt that I meant much to Disney, even as a paying member of his audience. Walt Disney strikes me as having been a man with a remarkable ability to plunge straight to the heart and gut of mankind in the mass, but with little understanding of or sympathy for individual human beings. The troubled history of labor relations at his Studio is perhaps proof of that. The Studio could never have been confused Santa Claus' workshop. Consider too the highly private funeral service, at which only members of Disney's family were present--at his request. This was in striking contrast to Hollywood's usual practice when a figure of Disney's importance dies. In a sense, Walt Disney didn't need my grief. ## In COMIC ART #6, the Thompsons noted the flood of letters about Dick Lupoff's "Hello There, Boys and Girls," and said this: "Unfortunately, many letter writers attacked him for saying that comics were trash and comic book fans were morons (that must have appeared in another article in some other publication)." I feel much the same way after reading your vociferous criticisms of "'Hello There, Boys and Girls' Revisited" (FUNNYWORLD #1). Some of your misunderstandings or misreadings of what I said seem almost perverse. I'm at least partially to blame, though, for not making it clear that it was attitudes, and not an age group, that I was attacking. There *are* teenagers who are "genuine fans," and I wasn't confusing them with "the ten-year-old who writes an incoherent letter to Stan Lee telling him that each succeeding DAREDEVIL artist is better than the last, using the well-worn cliche of the genuine fan to convey an idea which he only borrowed from the credits page of the comic in question (and doesn't really understand), anyway." My point was, a lot of "genuine fans," of whatever age, have let themselves believe such ten-year-olds are "genuine fans," too, to the detriment of both the

the ten-year-olds and comics fandom as a whole. It's not really the ten-year-olds who bother me though--they may very well depart with the end of the Batman craze--but the older fans who have passed the "comic book reading stage" and cling to fandom and the comics as an emotional crutch. It's fine to continue to read comics past the "comic book reading stage"--we all know that--but it's wrong to reading nothing *but* comics, or to read them for the wrong reasons, and I have the feeling that many so-called "fans" do just that. It's inevitable that such sad cases should be attracted to fandom; all I said was that we shouldn't encourage them. # I also criticized another group of fans--those who believe (or try to believe) that Comic Books Are Literature. This isn't to say that all comic books *aren't* literature; I believe some are. But the fans who believe comic books are capital-L literature aren't really sticking up for the comics, they're sticking up for themselves. It's a familiar spectacle. Here you have Joe Fan, still digging comic books when his friends have moved on to cars and girls. He may keep his habit a close secret, or laugh it off when his friends catch him at it, but it still bugs him. The teen years are a conforming time. So he rationalizes, to prove to himself, if to no one else, that there's really nothing wrong with an intelligent teenager who reads comic books. He analyzes stories, analyzes artists' styles, writes fanzine articles, and depending upon his bent, winds up talking about comic books as if every issue were a literary event ("To me, those early issues of MILITARY constitute some of the most moving prose in literature, meaning that a tongue-in-cheek analysis is hardly appropriate!"--Bob Butts in ALTER EGO #9) or a revealing social document (most of Rick Weingroff's "serious pieces). Okay, some comic books are literature, some are social documents, but a lot of them are trash and a lot of them are simply good light entertainment. To approach each comic book (or each super-hero comic book) with the Butts or Weingroff mind-set is silly. The problem with such fans is that they don't really *like* comic books, or don't know if they like them or not; their attitudes are confused. Of course, there's nothing wrong per se with writing fanzine articles or analyzing stories and artists' styles--it's the way it's done that counts, and it's the fans who strike self-conscious, pseudo-intellectual poses who are the objects of my wrath. Weingroff's most recent articles represent the ultimate in self-justification, since he has gone over completely to the side of such writers as Reuel Denney and David Manning White, who consider the comics in their roles as social scientists, and certainly not as fans. Social scientists analyze the comics to learn what they reveal about their readers, which is what Weingroff has done in things like "Inner or Other: A Theory on Superman." Here, and in other articles, Weingroff *uses* the comics to prove his intellectual respectability, which he presumably wouldn't have to prove if he weren't a comics fan. Weingroff represents an extreme development, but there are many other fans headed in the same direction. It's fans like these who should leave the comics alone for a time (and lock their collections in a trunk), until they've had time to sort out their feelings. The "genuine fan" who knows he likes the comics and makes no bones about it (and I assume you're one) has no reason to do this--but I suspect such "genuine fans" are in the minority. ## I've been through all sorts of phases myself, which is why I feel strongly about some of the things I've said above. I was a snotty-kid fan once, and then a teen-age fan who felt a lingering sense of shame about buying the latest issues of NEW FUNNIES and LOONEY TUNES while my friends were grappling in back seats at drive-ins. And then, when my interest in comics revived in the early '60s and I started looking for old issues, I rationalized like mad--I was going to make a "study" of the comic book as a narrative medium, I was going to do this, I was going to do that--my head was full of interior monologues which sounded like nothing so much as Richard Kyle at his infrequent worst. When I finally discovered comics fandom, and found that not quite everyone else in the world was out of step, I became the prototypical neofan for a couple of months, in my ecstasy--insisting that COMIC ART go offset, sending news notes to THE COMIC READER, all sorts of things like that. My own little inner war still isn't over, but the most important battles have been won. At bottom, I've always bought, read and collected comic books because I liked them, and for no other reason. I'm at last to the point where I can admit this to myself without any hesitation. Nostalgia alone isn't an adequate explanation, but I doubt that I would like comic books nearly so much if I hadn't acquired a taste for them in childhood. Comic books *are* children's literature--they're designed for children, and bought by children, most of them, and even Stan Lee's comic books aren't aimed at an age group all that much older. However, to say comic books are children's literature isn't to say that we should put them away on our 13th birthdays, or whenever it is you put away childish things. The distinction between children's literature and adult literature is phony, basically. Good books for children are good books, period, and mediocre and bad children's books are mediocre and bad whether children or adults read them. If I were to choose between THE TIN WOODMAN OF OZ and the latest Irving Wallace doorstop, my choice would be a simple one indeed. I'm not about to remove ALICE IN WONDERLAND and Freddy the pig and THE HOBBIT from my shelves because they're"for children." The distinction is especially pointless where comic books and strips are concerned, since the essentials for a good children's book are the same as the essentials for a good comic strip aimed at *any* age group. In each case, it's what more the author does after he's supplied those essentials that counts most. Obviously, I believe some comic book "authors" have done a great deal more; I probably wouldn't devote so much time to the comics if I didn't. The fact remains, though, that most comic books were designed as light entertainment for children, and their success as light entertainment is what counts. Some comic books are entertaining and more, and so deserve more serious consideration--but still, as comic books and not as something else. Perhaps the Barks article next issue will give you some idea of what I have in mind. ## And incidentally, the "funny animal" comic books in which I'm most interested were prepared with 8-to-12-year-old readers in mind--not 4-to-8-year-olds. It makes a big difference, spelled L-I-T-E-R-A-C-Y. There's only one line of humor comics published today aimed at pre-schoolers--CASPER and company. I never buy any of them. ## I don't want to get in a feud with you over aesthetics, but when you say, "aesthetics involves only one thing, a subjective judgment," you're wrong. What I like and what's good are not necessarily identical. The man who would rather read Mort Weisinger's comic books than Shakespeare's plays is entitled to his preference; the man who says Mort Weisinger's comic books are better than Shakespeare's plays isn't just expressing an opinion, he's wrong. There are standards, however fragile and amorphous. I like a lot of comic books which I know are not really very good. By the same token, I dislike some things--"The Faerie Queen," say, or Bruckner's symphonies--whose quality is self-evident. I know what I like...but I also know that what I like isn't necessarily "good." ## When I spoke of fans "whose interest in the comics is genuine, but peripheral to some other interest," I was speaking of science-fiction fans and fantasy fans and Burroughs fans--not comics fans. Comics are my major fan interest, and virtually my only fan interest. ## And do you really think Australian censorship is a "more elevated" topic than the comics? Gad. ## The UNCLE SCROOGE circulation figures you mention are for mail subscriptions only. I don't know why GK gave only mail figures in their 1963 comic books; they haven't done it before or since.

To KIM WESTON (Choke): I hope the names of Disney artists, and other such bits of information, scattered through this issue are enough to satisfy you for the nonce. I'd like to give more information about writers and artists, but I usually don't have it. The Barks Index will be quite complete, though, and will include Barks' non-duck strips and the number of pages in each story. ## I think you're right about a different artist doing several "Donald Duck" strips in recent issues of WALT DISNEY'S COMICS, but I can't agree that his work is any improvement over what Anthony Strobl has been doing.

To ANDY ZERBE (Zamindar): Two questions about your want list. I knew about the 10 Fawcett issues of GENE AUTRY; but then you list a #11 published by Dell--did Dell continue the Fawcett series for one issue before it began publishing GA comics in the Four Color series? And on the Luke Short comics --I knew about the Dell issues (I have several), but you also list a #1 and #2. Were these Dell issues, or Gold Key issues, or were they published by some other company? ## Sam Glanzman as the SILVERTIP artist is just a guess. There are some general similarities between the SILVERTIP art and Glanzman's art on KONA and other recent Dell titles, but certainly Glanzman's art today is much coarser.

To FRED PATTEN (Heavy Water): Thank you most kindly for the Tintin listing. I've recently bought all but two of the British editions (they're on order now, so my collection should be complete soon), and it's good to know the order in which the books were first published. I had tried to arrange them in chronological order myself, using internal evidence in the stories themselves, but gave it up as a bad job.

To GLEN JOHNSON (Small Talk): The artist for THE OWL is Tom Gill, who has done THE LONE RANGER, FURY, BONANZA and a multitude of other strips for Western Printing over the years.

To JON INGERSOLL (Squidgit): The Gold Key code number for HONEY WEST is 10186, not 10168. I'll probably publish a GK listing this summer, after a final effort to plug the few remaining holes. ## Surely an MIT student-to-be can produce a better contribution. SQUIDGIT is frequently so sloppy--and its contents so trivial--that I don't bother to give it more than the most superficial reading.

To DICK TATGE (Wooly Mammoth): How do you know I'm not a heroic adventurer who turns to the "funny animals" for escape after a hard day routing baddies? Thanks for making my day.

Next issue: Comments for Robert Schoenfeld, Steve Kelez, the Howards, the Thompsons, Al Kuhfeld, Jerry Bails and probably others.